Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1561 - July 13, 2007

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1561 with a release date of Friday, July 13, 2007 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Hams down-under respond as flood waters rise, wildfires won't stop the fall Amateur Radio Direction Finding Championship and the FCC says no to special military call sign designators requeasted by the QCWA. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1561 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO: VK HAMS VS. THE GIPPSLAND FLOODS

Ham radio proved to be an important channel of communications as flood waters ravaged the Gippsland area of Australia's Victoria state. Jim Linton, VK3PC, of the WIA News has the details:

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Providing communications support during the flood disaster in eastern Victoria were seven radio amateurs, members of RECOM the communications arm of the Australian Red Cross.

John Patterson VK3ATQ of RECOM reports its role was centered on emergency relief centers at Paynesville, Sale, Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance.

There the team registered 361 flood evacuees and transmitted this information back to the Red Cross Headquarters in Melbourne using data communications.

RECOM also provided other reliable communications of administrative traffic for the Red Cross. The operators involved included VK3ATQ, VK3AUO, VK3BQS, VK3BPD, VK3EK, VK3GBJ and VK3XSW.

The floods at some locations cut power or put it at risk and RECOM was fully prepared with self-reliant auxiliary power.

John VK3ATQ found himself being interviewed numerous times by the ABC as part of its public information coverage as the flood disaster unfolded.

The RECOM guys with their communications 'go-kits' and four wheel drive vehicles were activated for five-days in the flood areas.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Linton, VK3PC.

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According to VK3PC, RECOM began in Australia's Victoria state. Its is now grown to become a nation-wide service group with ever increasing recognition. (WIA News)

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RESCUE RADIO: EAS MISTAKE IN ILLINOIS

Several hundred radio and television stations in Illinois were affected by an E-A-S mistake the morning of June 26th. This, when the Illinois Emergency Management Agency was testing new equipment in what was supposed to be a closed-circuit test of the 10-minute presidential alert message from FEMA.

Between 7:30 and 8 a.m., depending on when each station in the chain got the message, their programming was taken over for 10 minutes. A monthly test would have lasted for two minutes, as opposed to the 10-minute presidential alert.

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency said it had no advance warning of the test and that the federal government used a hot or active code rather than a test code for the test message. Chicago, Rockford, Quincy, and Springfield were among the affected areas.

FEMA says it's trying to upgrade EAS with satellite delivery, and the snafu occurred in Illinois because a contractor improperly installed equipment and basically created an open loop. The system was not supposed to be on line at the time. (RW, listerner reports)

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RADIOSPORTS: WILDFIRES WONT HAMPER ARDF CHAMPIONSHIPS

The recent wildfire near Lake Tahoe on the Nevada and California border has not put an end to the planning for this year's hidden transmitter hunting championship games. They will take place as planned. Amateur Radio Newsline's Joe Moell K0OV, has the story.

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It's full speed ahead with preparations for the Seventh Annual Championships of Amateur Radio Direction Finding, or ARDF. This year's championships will take place on the weekend of September 14 through 16 in the El Dorado Forest

near Lake Tahoe. That's in the Sierra Mountains near the California/Nevada border. Primary sponsor is the Santa Barbara Amateur Radio Club. Marvin Johnston KE6HTS is General Chair of the organizers.

Most of the competitors will be staying at Camp Concord, a rustic but comfortable facility that's two miles west of the city of South Lake Tahoe, near the shore of Fallen Leaf Lake. Camp staff will provide meals during the events, and everyone can walk to the competition courses from there.

Registration opened in early June and plans for the championships were proceeding. Then on the afternoon of June 24, a forest fire broke out south of Fallen Leaf Lake. Fanned by high winds, it moved rapidly northeast into a nearby residential area. Over 550 firefighters worked diligently around the clock to slow the expansion of the burn area and prevent further structure damage.

Full containment of the Angora fire, as it was called, was achieved just before Independence Day. It destroyed 3100 acres, 242 homes and 67 commercial buildings. Total loss has been estimated at 11.7 million dollars.

Camp Concord is 1.6 miles from the edge of the burn area and has reopened for the summer camping season. The entire burn area is closed until at least November 30 to protect the fragile environment. But the forest land near the shores of Fallen Leaf Lake has mostly been spared.

With a few minor map revisions, everything looks good to go. Early Bird registration was scheduled to end on July 14, but because of the delay, that deadline has been extended to July 31

You and your family are invited to the championships this year. Anyone with reasonable physical abilities can participate. A ham license is not required and there are no age limits, but you must be able to run or walk through the forest and carry your DF gear for five to ten kilometers. You might even win a spot on USA's team to the next ARDF World Championships. Read more about the championships, and international-style transmitter hunting, at the usual place: homingin.com. Homing In is entered as one word, homingin.com.

From southern California, this Joe Moell, K-zero-O-V for Amateur Radio Newsline.

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Again, this year's ARDF Championship games will take place on the weekend of September 14 through 16 in the El Dorado Forest near Lake Tahoe. And as Joe said, more is on-line at www.homingin.com. (K0OV, ARNewsline(tm))

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RADIO SPORTS: IARU WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

The International Amateur Radio Union's High Frequency World Championship operating event is taking place as this newscast goes to air. RSGB News Reader Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, has some background on the event and how its scoring security is enforced:

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Participation in the IARU HF World Championship due to take place on 14 to 15 July has grown steadily for the past four years, despite solar activity trending in the wrong direction. The creation of Low Power and QRP categories has contributed to increasing both the popularity and the competitiveness of the event.

A condition of entry in the IARU HF World Championship is that each entrant agrees to be bound by the provisions of the announced rules, by the regulations of his or her licensing authority. Also by the decisions of the ARRL Awards Committee acting for the IARU International Secretariat.

Leading competitors should expect their entries to be carefully scrutinised. If exceptional results are claimed, entrants must be prepared to explain how they were achieved.

Im Jeramy Boot, G4NJH

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According to the ARRL Letter, the League administers the High Frequency World Championship on behalf of the IARU. (GB2RS)

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REGULATORY NEWS: FCC TO RESCIND E-MAIL FILING SYSTEM

Starting this September, there will be no filing at the FCC by fax or e-mail. Radio World reports that the regulatory agency is doing away with interim procedures it adopted in 2001 to allow electronic filing of certain pleadings.

The procedure in question came into being following an anthrax scare on Capitol Hill and some U.S. Postal Service processing facilities. This disrupted mail delivery and required certain documents to be filed via fax or e-mail, by an overnight delivery service other than the U.S. Postal Service, or by hand-delivery to the commission's Capitol Heights, Maryland location. Since that time, mail delivery in the Washington areas has improved and the FCC has implemented its own processes to combat the threat of contamination of incoming mail. The commission also has expanded its online filing capabilities.

Based on this, the agency decided to rescind the interim procedures effective September 25th. After that date, filings will no longer be accepted by facsimile or e-mail unless otherwise authorized by the FCC's rules. Its not clear if this decision to revert back to the old system will affect ham radio operators filing of rules change requests or those making comments on them. (Published reports)

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Break 1

From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the AA5RO repeater of the Alamo Area Radio Association, serving San Antonio Texas.

(5 sec pause here)

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RERGULATORY NEWS: VEC MISTAKE LEADS TO PROPOSED LICENSE DOWNGRADE

The FCC says that a clerical error made by the W5YI VEC has resulted in Joseph K. Lewis, N1LNV, being granted an un-earned upgrade. Now the agency wants to take it back. And it will do so unless Joseph K. Lewis files an objection to the regulatory agency within the next several days. Amateur Radio Newsline's Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, has more:

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According to an FCC release, back on April 10th of this year the W5YI Volunteer Examiner Coordinator sent an electronic data file to the Commission, One requesting that Joseph K. Lewis's operator license for station N1LNV be

upgrade to General Class operator privileges. Based on this application, the Commission granted the request the same day.

Then on dated May 16th, the W5YI V-E-C notified the Commission that it had made a typographical error in the April 10th data filing and that Lewis had not qualified for a General Class operator license. It urged the FCC to modify Lewis's license to correct the Technician Class operator privileges for which he was actually authorized.

The FCC says that right now the W5YI V-E-C's request is most properly characterized as an informal request for Commission action under Section 1.41 of the Commission's Rules. However, based on the information now before it now, the FCC says that it appears to it that the grant of General Class operator privileges to Lewis was erroneous. This is because he did not pass the examination necessary to qualify for a General Class operator license. Rather, he appears to be currently authorized to operate with General Class operator privileges only due to a typographical error made during the application process.

So here's what happens now. The FCC says that it believes that a modification of the license for amateur station N1LNV to Technician is appropriate. That said, it is giving Lewis 30 days to file a statement opposing this action. If no objection is forthcoming from Lewis, he will be considered having waived his right to protest and will be deemed to have given the FCC his consent for the FCC action to change his license to Technician class to proceed.

For the Amateur radio Newsline, I'm Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, reporting from New York.

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The FCC order proposing the license modification was issued on July 9th. We will let you know the outcome of this one in about a month. (FCC)

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RADIO LAW: QCWA MILITARY CALL SIGN PETITION DISMISED

The FCC has dismissed a rules change request asked by the Quarter Century Wireless Association. One that would have permitted hams who were currently a member of, or those who have been honorably discharged member of the United

States military to include a unique indicator
with the station's call sign identification announcement.

In saying no to this one, the FCC noted that its
rules already permit the inclusion of indicators
with the call sign during station
identification. This, provided that no
self-assigned indicator conflicts with any
indicator specified by the Commission's rules or
with any prefix assigned to another country. As
such, the FCC says that Amateur Radio operators
who are in current service or who have been
honorably discharged already are permitted to
identify their stations in the way that the QCWA
suggests. As such, it deems this rule change as unnecessary. (FCC)

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REGULATIORY NEWS: FCC WILL NOT CHANGE ID TIME PERIOD RULES

The FCC has said no to a pair of hams who sought
to change the time period in which it requires an
Amateur station to identify.   Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has more:

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There were two I-D time limit filings. In the
first, Glen Zook, K9STH, of Richardson, Texas,
had asked the regulatory agency require that hams
transmit their callsign at the beginning and end
of each single transmission and at other times
involving short interval communications.

On the other side of the call sign issues was
Murray Green, K3BEQ, of Cheverly,
Maryland. Green had petitioned the FCC to reduce
the required frequency of station identification
period to every 30 minutes, rather than once every 10 minutes as it is now.

In denying both petitions the FCC said that the
present rule has not been shown to be burdensome
or unreasonable. The agency said that it agreed
with the comments that say that the problem of
operators who do not comply with the current
identification rule is better addressed by
enforcement rather than another rules change.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill
Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the studio in Los Angeles.

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The bottom line: The FCC sees nothing wrong with
the current 10 minute I-D requirement and plans to keep it that way. (FCC)

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RADIO LAW: A NEW PUSH FOR LPFM

Low Power FM station backers in Congress are pushing again to make the FCC ease restrictions on low-power stations. Proponents want the commission to eliminate third-adjacent minimum distance separation requirements between L-P-F-Ms and other full power F-M stations.

Backers say that when Congress authorized the FCC to issue L-P-F-M licenses in 2000, it attached an unnecessary rule that limited these stations to rural areas. Since then, thousands who submitted applications with the FCC to operate their own stations have been blocked.

But proponents point out that the FCC's own MITRE Study. In 2003 the Commission found that increasing the number of Low Power FM stations would not cause significant interference and that the FCC then urged Congress to repeal the restrictions.   (RW)

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RADIO HELP: NEW SHORTWAVE TRANSMITTER USERS REMAILER

Stephen Lockwood of Hatfield and Dawson Consulting Engineers has set up e-mail list servers on the Society of Broadcast Engineers Chapter 16 server to help shortwave transmitter users. According to the National Association of Shortwave Broadcasters, the servers are a forum for suggestions for maintenance and operation of Continental 418 and Harris SW 100 transmitters. For questions e-mail lockwood@hatdaw.com. (Radio Remailer)

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SPECIAL EVENTS: AIR VENTURE 2007 FROM WISCONSIN

Ham radio and flight will be coming together later this month in Wisconsin. This, at one of the worlds largest and best known fly-in events. Amateur Radio Newsline's Jeff Clark, K8JAC, has more:

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The Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club station ,W9ZL. will once again run a special event station. This. from Thursday July 26th through Sunday July 29th from the grounds of the AirVenture 2007 fly-in in Oskosh, Wisconsin.

The station will run from 1300 to 2100 U-T-C

each day on 14.270 and 7.250, as well as locally on 146.520 and over the 146.760 repeater. The latter requires a 100 hertz access tone. All hams attending AirVenture are encouraged to stop by to visit and be a guest operator at our station

A certificate will be sent to all High Frequency contacts who QSL first with a 9" x 12" Self Addressed Stamped Envelope. Send your QSL info to Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club, Attn: N9YMC at PO Box 5233, Appleton, Wisconsin, 54912.

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Details about AirVenture 2007 are on-line at www.airventure.org Information about the Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club is in cyberspace at www.fcarc.us (N9MYC)

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COMMUNICATIONS BUSINESS: BLOCKBUSTER SAYS YES TO BLU RAY DVD

Blockbuster Video rentals has chosen the Sony backed Blu Ray high definition DVD as its next generation video rental product. The move gives significant weight to predictions that stores and other retail outlets would begin to have a say in the Blu Ray versus HD DVD format war.

Blockbuster came to its decision after test marketing both emerging DVD formats in 250 of its stores. After analyzing consumer response, it decided to stock only Blu Ray disks in its next 1,450 stores to get high-def movies. HD DVD will still be available online and at the locations that Blockbuster used in testing rentals of both formats.

So far, the new high definition video disks account for less than 1 percent of today's DVD sales. (Future Trends)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: AMSAT-UK SPACE COLLOQUIUM - JULY 20 - 22

AMSAT-UK will be holding its 22nd annual International Space Colloquium at the University of Surrey, Guildford, from July 20th to the 22nd. This years keynote speaker is Pat Norris. Norris is the Chairman of the Royal Aeronautical Society Space Group. His talk is titled "Spies in the Sky: Surveillance Satellites in War and Peace."

Also, a Satellite Beginners Workshop will be held on July 20th For further details take your web browser to www.uk.amsat.org/Colloquium/. (GB2RS)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: DCC PAPERS DEADLINE JULY 31ST

Technical papers are solicited for presentation
at the 26th Annual ARRL and TAPR Digital
Communications Conference. That event is slated
to be held September 28th to the 30th in
Hartford, Connecticut. These papers will also be
published in the Conference Proceedings. Papers
will be published exactly as submitted and authors will retain all rights.

The submission deadline is July 31st.   Please
send papers to Maty Weinberg, ARRL, 225 Main
Street, Newington, Connecticut, 06111. Or you
can make your submission via e-mail to: maty@arrl.org (ARRL, TAPR)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio
amateur. From the United States of America, We
are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the
world from our only official website at
www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the
volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: NEW HIGH SENSITIVITY CAMERA CHIPS

A new image sensor could revolutionize the way
you take pictures. Even those you send via A-T-V. Jim Davis, W2JKD, has
 more:

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Eastman Kodak says it's developed a color filter
technology that will at least double the
sensitivity to sensors used in digital
cameras. Kodak expects to provide samples of the
new chips to a variety of camera manufacturers in the first quarter of 2008.

The new technology is likely to be quickly
incorporated into mass-market point-and-shoot
cameras and camera-equipped cellular telephones
phones beginning sometime next year.

I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD.

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The new sensors are not quite see in the dark devices, but are the next step in getting there. (Science On-Line)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AMSAT TO ELECT NEW LEADERS

Nominations for the 2007 AMSAT Board of Directors have closed. The list of qualified candidates includes Barry Baines, WD4ASW, Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, Rick Hambly, W2GPS, Lee McLamb, KU4OS and Gunther Meisse, W8GSM.

The terms of four directors are up this year. Ballots and biographical information submitted by each candidate will be in the mail to current AMSAT members by July 15th. Return ballots are due back at the AMSAT office in Silver Spring, Maryland no later than the close of business on the 15th of September.

The winners names will be announced shortly thereafter. Terms of the new directors start upon certification of the election. AMSAT Directors serve a two year term. (ANS)

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WORLDBEAT - SWITZERLAND: HD RADIO DAYS IN OCTOBER

The second HD Radio Days event is taking place in Lucerne, Switzerland in October. The gathering, at Hotel Radisson SAS Lakefront, will include a presentation of the final report on the Swiss HD Radio field trial reported above. A variety of test vehicles equipped with HD Radios will be on hand for participants to drive. Separate workshops will demonstrate a frequency assignment simulation, plus receivers. A detailed program and registration information will be posted in August. (Media Net)

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WORLDBEAT - SOUTH AFRICA: NEW LOWER HAM TEST FEES

The cost of taking a ham radio test in South Africa is going down, This, according to South African Radio League President Graham Hartlett, ZS6GJH who has announced a substantial reduction in the cost of taking that nations Radio Amateur Exam.

According to Hartlett, the reduction has been made possible because the nations telecommunications regulator has agreed that the South African Radio League, as the national body for Amateur Radio, will be authorized to issue

the Radio Amateur Exam certificates. This takes a major expense off the governments shoulders. The new lower fee will include one re-test should the candidate fail the first attempt at the examination. (Southgate)

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WORLDBEAT - UK: NEW IOTA WEBSITE OPENS

The RSGB's premier DX award program has launched its new website. Devoted entirely to the Islands on the Air or IOTA program, the spot in cyberspace came on-line on Thursday, June 21st.

The new web pages feature many innovative improvements including the ability to view one's own record of island groups confirmed. In the near future it will be possible for participants to claim additional credits on-line and even to claim credit for IOTA Contest QSOs without the need for QSL card verification.

The site is located at www.rsgbiota.org. It was developed by Dominic Smith, M0BLF, with Martin Atherton, G3ZAY, acting as the liaison between the project team and the IOTA Committee. (GB2RS)

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WORLDBEAT - UK: ANALONG MAY END IN 2015

According to an article in the Sunday Telegraph newspaper, commercial radio companies in the United Kingdom are looking to set a firm end date for analog radio.

The industry body RadioCentre was expected to approach the British broadcast regulator, Ofcom, about setting a shutoff date for analog radio that could be as early as 2015.

An analog shutdown would mirror the transition path being followed by the U-K television industry, which will see an end to terrestrial analog broadcasting in 2012.

There is a concern, according to the Telegraph report, that only a firm analog shutoff date will ensure continued investment and development of digital radio, although there are political concerns about making millions of analog receivers obsolete. (RW)

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WORLDBEAT - UK: NEW IOTA WEBSITE OPENS

In other news from around the world, word that

the RSGB's premier D-X award program has launched a new website. Devoted entirely to the Islands on the Air or IOTA program, the spot in cyberspace came on-line on Thursday, June 21st.

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DX

In DX, word that A multinational team lead by Francesco, IK0FVC, will activate 1A0KM from the Sovereign Military Order of Malta between July 12th to the 22nd. Activity is planned for 160 meters through 23 centimeters on all modes. There will be a possibility of some EME activity during the first weekend of operations. QSL via IK0FTA.

Also, A25CF, and his team of operators are active from Botswana until July the 20th. Activity is on 160 through 6 meters on CW and SSB, with operations also on 6 and 2 meters along with 70 centimeter EME. QSL as directed by each operator.

Worldradio magazine editor Nancy Kott, WZ8C, and several others are operating from the island of Tortola through July 18th. The group is participating in the FISTS CW Club summer sprint on Friday July 13 and the IARU contest the weekend of the 14th. Operation during the rest of the time will be on SSB, RTTY and CW with an emphasis on straight key operation. QSL via the FISTS bureau or W5PF

Lastly, listen out for EA1FCH, will be active portable CU2 from Sao Miguel in the Eastern Island Group from July 27th through August 5th. Activity will be on the lower bands and WARC bands, mainly CW and the Digital modes. QSL EA1FCH direct or via the bureau.

(Above from various DX newsletters and other sources)

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THE NEWSLINE ON-LINE SURVEY: JUNE RESULTS AND A NEW ONE FOR JULY

And finally this week, we have the results of the past months on-line Newsline website survey that asked you what your favorite ham radio magazine is. Coming in as the most read was the ARRL's Q-S-T Magazine with 63.3% of the vote. In second place among our listeners is Worldradio. It garnered 18% of the vote. Third place in went to CQ with 13.5%. The rest of you voted "other" and accounted for 5.2% of those who responded.

As we have said in the past, these surveys are not meant to be a scientific sampling. Rather, it's a fun way for those of you interested to tell the rest of the world your choice.

And in keeping with the fun theme of our surveys, the new one now on-line asks a follow up question. This one asks where in your home do you read your favorite ham magazine.

Again, you have four choices. Please go to www.arnewsline.org and cast your vote right now. (ARNewsline(tm))

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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